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INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 7245
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 4620
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 8522
RUEHB/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 5746
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 2972
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 3169
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 3653
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 4966
RUEHQ/AMEMBASSY QUITO 5607
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 002971

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TAGS: ECON PGOV PREL BL

SUBJECT: BOLIVIAN VP'S LATE NIGHT TRY AT CONSTITUTION DEAL

Classified By: Amb. Philip S. Goldberg for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) In a private lunch on November 6, Branko Marinkovic, President of the Santa Cruz Civic Committee and owner of extensive land holdings and a large cooking oil factory, told the Ambassador that Vice President Garcia Linera had offered him a deal on the constitution about a month ago. Branko said that one night around 10 p.m. he got a call from Garcia Linera saying he wanted to meet with him. According to Branko, he told Garcia Linera that he did not want to meet, to which Garcia Linera responded that he was actually parked outside of Branko's home in Santa Cruz and would wait for him to get home. Branko said that Garcia Linera offered that if Branko would agree to have the opposition approve a "constitution light" that included reelection for President Evo Morales, he would make all of Branko's land problems "disappear" (Note: The GOB has initiated "land reform" proceedings against Branko's properties. End note.) Branko said he told Garcia Linera that he would not make such a deal and to go ahead and take away his land.

¶2. (C) Branko told the Ambassador that the GOB is desperate to get reelection included in the new constitutions through any means possible. Branko and the Santa Cruz opposition plan to do everything in their power to not include reelection.

COMMENT

¶3. (C) The Vice President has been the GOB's main deal broker (although not too successfully) for the Constituent Assembly. The fact that he would show up unannounced late at night at one of Evo Morales' chief opponents house to offer a deal confirms what many contacts have been telling us: the MAS is willing to negotiate just about anything in order to have reelection included in the new constitution. End comment.

GOLDBERG